

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A valve unit 36 is placed in an ink flow passage 35 between an ink cartridge 8 and a recording head 7 and can be controlled in association with the cleaning operation of the recording head 7. Under the control of a drive controller, the valve unit 36 holds for a predetermined time a state in which negative pressure produced by a suction pump is accumulated, and is opened after the expiration of the predetermined time or is opened with the negative pressure accumulated and driving the suction pump is continued. The air bubbles remaining in a stuck state in the ink flow passage can be peeled from the ink flow passage together with an instantaneous fast ink flow produced as the valve unit 36 is opened, and the peeled air bubbles can be discharged effectively from the ink flow passage following the subsequent ink flow.